

# Interned Huns Make Up a "Little Prussia"

## Kaiserism Rampant in Utah Detention Pen, Prisoner Writes, Due Wholly to Inmates' Own Desires

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CHAPTER I.

**I**N a giant kettle formed by the Wasatch range of mountains lies a strange little commonwealth. Its borders are a double barbed wire fence, its ruler a United States Colonel, its prime minister a Lieutenant-Colonel. Officially the settlement is known as the Third United States War Prison, Fort Douglas, Utah; its inhabitants call it Little Germany.

If you could live in Little Germany a few weeks, if you could associate with its population, see the men at work and at play, hear their conversations and study their characters, you would readily obtain a very good idea of some of the things that are the matter with Big Germany.

I am, alas! an involuntary dweller in the Kaiser's Utah colony. Although I have lived in this country for many years I am one of the many who neglected to swear allegiance to it, and now I am paying the penalty for my neglect. But if anything was necessary to make me a loyal American, to estrange me forever from the land of my birth, this sojourn in the barbed cage is the best demonstration.

### Spirit of Germany Is Plain.

After one enters the gates of the internment camp it becomes obvious immediately that the spirit of Germany has been systematically carried out. The main street has been named by the prisoners Unter den Linden, after Berlin's principal avenue. There is a Kaiser Wilhelmstrasse, a Hindenburg platz, a Gesundbrunnen (fountain of health), a Siegesallee (Victory avenue) and even a Bolsheviki Plaza.

The military authorities in charge of the camp look indulgently on. The men within the fence are out of harm's reach. Their activities, as one of the officers expressed it, are "steam that must be shut off."

Therefore it is a common occurrence that while the military band on the hill plays "The Star Spangled Banner" an enthusiastic crowd of prisoners sings "Deutschland, Deutschland ueber Alles" to the accompaniment of a rickety piano operated by a large music teacher with a blond mustache.

There are now about 600 men interned in the camp, and every day the number increases. Although most of the inmates have been in America many years a large percentage of them still cling tenaciously to Germany—at least with their tongues.

But if they were given an opportunity right now to return to the land of their ideals 95 per cent. of them would beg on their bended knees to be permitted to remain here. In the still of the evenings, when no one listens, one of the favorite topics of conversation is the matter of deportation, and deportation seems to be the bogey man of the camp.

### Strict Distinctions of Class.

Of German types there are many in the Fort Douglas prison camp. The observer is at once struck by the strict class conscience that prevails throughout the mustard colored barracks and in all the camp activities. Titles may be found in abundance. Counts, barons, professors, doctors and members of Germany's lowest grade of nobility designated by the prefix "von" are scattered throughout the place. Many of the so-called aristocrats are plainly impostors. But they cling to their fairy tales with a tenacity that is astonishing.

The peer of the camp nobility is the worthless son of a well known family of counts in Prussia. He is looked up to by the other men, or at least most of the other men, with an awe that amounts almost to worship. His exploits since he came to America have been often told by newspaper headlines both in the United States and in Canada, where his attempts at frenzied finance would have provoked the envy of a Wallingford.

"The Kaiser's American agent" he was dubbed by the reporters.

The legend was that he was sent to this country to invest the Emperor's money in the colossal resources of America. He had 40,000,000 marks of royal funds, it



INTERNMENT CAMP in UTAH.

was reported, and many more thousands belonging to princes of the blood and members of the court. How much of this is true I do not know. But I do know that this aristocrat failed both in the military academy and in the German army and that he was sent to the United States by the Kaiser's wish and that of his family, "to make a man of himself."

When he was arrested he was practically down to his last dollar, and his straits were so bad that he had previously sold his furniture and even the few books which he called his own. That this man is really a dangerous enemy is certain; that he had connections with the fatherland which he used against the welfare of the United States is also sure. This son of a count is the chief trouble maker in the camp, and many of the disturbances which occur can be traced directly to him.

The officers in charge have tried repeatedly to subdue him. He is a regular lodger in the guard house. Bread and water diets are nothing new to him. But in spite of all he insists on flooding the Swiss Legation, the temporary representative of the German Government in the United States, with complaints of the most trivial nature, and his chief joy is to harass and torment the authorities.

### Allied Himself With the I. W. W.

Although a typical German aristocrat, with all the arrogance, the snobbishness, the conceit of the breed, he allied himself soon after his arrival with the most turbulent element in the camp, the I. W. W. And, strangely enough, these men, who deny all rights of class and heritage, were glad enough to accept his leadership and under his guidance to be as obstreperous as possible.

A pleasant pastime of the I. W. W. was to sing anti-American songs whenever an officer or soldier was in hearing distance, and one of their favorite ditties was designed particularly to insult the executive officer of the camp. He stood it as long as he decently could, but at last remedial measures had to be taken. The dreaded guardhouse or "loch" (hole), as the Germans call it, had some little effect. And when a company of men was made to stand in the snow for several hours, that company also became a crowd of pretty good Germans.

The greatest disgrace here is to be called an "American"—it is equal to being ostracized, and he who tries to convince his fellow prisoners that the United States is a good land, that its cause is just and that Germany will be beaten is steadily in danger of bodily injury.

It is peculiar that those who shout loudest for Germany are men who have done least for their fatherland, for whom Germany has done nothing beyond giving them birth—men who for years have made their homes and a comfortable living in the United States.

There is, for instance, a young German Jew who has lived in America about eight years. I mention the fact that he is a Jew merely because he is of the type which was always subject to the vilest anti-Semitic sentiments in Germany. This fellow at the time of his arrest was an advertising man with a good American income. He is engaged to an American girl who is loyal to him, writes to him regularly and expresses her conviction that he is loyal to her country. Not long ago he delivered a vehement oration against the United States.

"I have found out where my place in

life is," he shouted, his little chest swelling out like that of a pouter pigeon. "It is in Germany, the land of the brave and the free, the land of my fathers and forefathers." And among the cheers of his fellow prisoners he strutted off into the mess hall.

After dinner I asked him whether he really intended to go back to Germany after the war.

"Of course," he said.

"Did you serve in the German army?"

"Yes."

"Did you report for service when the war broke out?"

"No."

"Then do you realize that twenty-four hours after you land in the country of your fathers and forefathers you will be arrested as a deserter and put in prison?"

Now that fellow had absolutely no intention to go back after the war. But when I am around he does not shout so much any more. However, whenever my back is turned I know that he speaks about me as the "American."

Another significant incident happened a week or so ago.

A prisoner had died in the camp hospital. The next morning a fine oak coffin was sent down from the quartermaster's stores, and in the afternoon a quartermaster's wagon carried the corpse to the fort cemetery, where the German was buried side by side with the American soldier dead. A United States Captain went along to the grave, a guard of soldiers and twelve of the interned men as pallbearers.

As soon as the cortege had left the camp an angry protest went the rounds.

"Why did they not send a hearse?" was the question. And the authorities were accused of having sent a dirt wagon to carry away their comrade—a deliberate insult to the prisoners and to Germany! One of the twelve pallbearers even stepped out of the ranks and berated the Captain before his own soldiers, a serious breach of all discipline, etiquette and politeness.

### Virulent Letter Written to Swiss.

It was explained by the officers that the burial was done exactly as in the case of a dead American soldier who had no funds to pay for a more elaborate funeral. The explanation was not accepted. A virulent letter (signed at the head by the son of a count) was written to the Swiss Legation and an apology was demanded.

And yet the very day of the funeral the prisoners held a "turnfest" (athletic festival) not more than a hundred feet from the chapel where their dead comrade lay. There were shouting and singing, baseball and vaulting, running and setting up exercises.

An amusing bit of psychology is the assumption of petty authority on the part of the prisoners who have been placed in charge of the various barracks and who have been given other camp jobs.

You should see these men, with all the clan of a German "unter officer." They issue edicts and orders of all sorts. And it is never "please", or "if you will." It is always "you must," "you are ordered." And the word "verboten," so dear to the German heart, is in constant use. They summon their men with police whistles, they strut with the swagger step of a German corporal and act with all the ridiculous verve of a Prussian superior.

What a contrast to the military but courteous mode of intercourse between the American officers and the inter-

As a matter of fact, it is really remarkable how little feeling seems to exist among the officers and guards against the prisoners. I have never experienced any such indignities as have been reported by British and French prisoners who escaped from German prison camps. I have never heard of an American officer spitting into a German's face, nor of a soldier hitting a prisoner with the butt of a rifle.

And when an American soldier wants to treat a prisoner decently he does not have to take him behind the barracks or sneak about it. Treatment in camp depends entirely on the man's own behavior.

### Treated With Kindness and Respect.

If a prisoner observes the rules he is treated with kindness and respect. If he is unruly and suffers from the hallucination that the Kaiser will personally avenge every wrong, imaginary or otherwise, that is done to his dear overseas subject he is quickly given the opportunity to see the error of his ways. Sometimes that is done by disciplinary measures, but often the executive officer takes the trouble of talking to the man and trying to change his ideas.

More than once the officers and soldiers have gone out of their way to do favors for me and other prisoners. More than once fellow prisoners of mine have gone out of their way to make life harder and more miserable for me.

I say this with no intention of flattering any one or of criticising any one else. I say it in fairness to those who are supposed to be our enemies and whose decency and sense of justice, to my mind, are characteristic of the whole American nation.

A few evenings ago I was standing outside of my barrack. One of the sergeants was eating nice, ripe, fresh cherries out of a bag. I do not know what expression was on my face, but the sergeant said:

"Long time since you've had cherries, eh?"

"I should say so," was my answer. And the soldier insisted that I take half of his fruit. The men in the same office have repeatedly given us fruit, cigarettes, matches and many other little things for which they had paid out of their own not too ample wages.

Of course, they are not all like that. There are "grouches" everywhere, there are always bad exceptions to a good rule. Undoubtedly some of the little men could be more polite; but soldiering is not a parlor game, and ten to twenty years in the service are bound to spoil a man's company manners somewhat.

To be continued in next Sunday's SUN.

### Patriotism Paints a Trunk

"A" T about this time I had intended," said the cheerful man, "to buy myself a new trunk, my old trunk beginning to look rather shabby.

"But when I came to look the old trunk over I found that it was still rugged and serviceable, and so the money with which I had intended to buy a trunk I diverted to a Liberty bond.

"I did, however, blow myself to a can of paint, and with that I painted the old trunk, making it look almost as good as new. So now I have an entirely respectable trunk and a Liberty bond besides."